

TO LESBIA, ABOUT KISSES

Vivamus, mea Lesbia, atque amemus
 rumoresque senum severiorum ^{seniores = old men}
 omnes [unius aestimemus assis] ^{as = copper coin}
 Soles occidere et redire possunt;
 [nobis cum semel occidit brevis lux, ^{semel = once}
 nox est perpetua una dormienda.]
 Da mi basia mille, deinde centum;
 dein mille altera, dein secunda centum;
 deinde usque altera mille, deinde centum.
 Dein, cum milia multa fecerimus,
 conturbabimus illa, ne sciamus,
 aut ne quis malus invidere possit,
 cum tantum sciat esse basiorum.

¹ we wish have done

² bewitch (look up with ill-will)

WHO'S THE NEW GIRL, FLAVIUS?

Flavi, delicias tuas Catullo,
 ni sint illepidae atque inelegantes,
 velles dicere nec tacere posses.
 Verum nescio quid febriculosi
 scorti diligis: hoc pudet fateri.
 Nam te non viduas iacere noctes
 nequiquam tacitum cubile clamat
 sertis ac Syrio fragrans olivo,
 pulvinusque peraeque et hic et ille
 attritus, tremulique quassa lecti
 argutatio inambulatioque.
 Nam nil stupra valet, nihil tacere.
 Cur? Non tam latera ecfututa pandas,
 ni tu quid facias ineptiarum.
 Quare, quidquid habes boni malique,
 dic nobis. Volo te ac tuos amores
 ad caelum lepido vocare versu.

HOW MANY KISSES

Quaeris quot mihi basiationes ^{quaeris = ask}
 tuae, Lesbia, sint satis superque.
 Quam magnus numerus Libyssae harenae ^{harena = sand}
 [asarpiciferis iacet Cyrenis]
 [oraclum] [Iovis inter aestuosi] ^{aestuosi = sweltering}
 et Batti veteris sacrum sepulcrum; ^{sepulcrum = tomb}
 aut quam sidera multa, cum tacet nox, ^{taceos = be silent}
 [furtivos hominum vident amores]
 tam te basia multa basiare
 [vesano satis et super Catullo] ^{Subject one}
 [est, quae nec pernumerare curiosi] ^{pernumerare = count out}
 possint nec [mala fascinare lingua] ^{Subject two}
 fascinare = (to bewitch)

BE DONE WITH HER, CATULLUS!

Miser Catulle, desinas ineptire, ^{ineptire = play the fool}
 et quod [vides perisse] [perditum ducas]
 Fulsero quondam candidi tibi soles, ^{candidus = bright}
 cum ventitabas quo puella ducebat
 amata nobis quantum amabitur nulla;
 ibi illa multa cum iocosa fiebant ^{cum = when}
 quae tu volebas nec puella nolebat,
 fulsere vere candidi tibi soles.
 Nunc iam illa non volt: tu quoque, impotens, noli, ^{impotens = powerless}
 nec quae fugit sectare, nec miser vive,
 sed [obstinata mente] [perfer, obdura. ^{obdura = be persistent}
 Vale, puella! Iam Catullus obdurat,
 nec te requiret, nec rogabit invitam. ^{invita = unwilling}
² At tu dolebis, cum rogaberis nulla.
 [Scelest, vae te] [Quae tibi manet vita] ¹⁵
 Quis nunc te adibit? Cui videberis bella? ^{bella = fair}
 Quem nunc amabis? Cuius esse diceris?
 Quem basiabis? Cui labella mordebis? ^{morde = bite}
 At tu, Catulle, ³ destinatus obdura.

¹ follow

⁵ "Whose will you be said to be?"

² who, wicked you!

³ stubborn (y)

⁴ (you) be unwilling!

WELCOME HOME, VERANIUS!

Verani, omnibus e² meis amicis
antistans mihi milibus trecentis,
venistine domum ad tuos penates
fratresque unanimos anumque matrem? anum = old
Venisti. O mihi nuntii beati!
Visam te incolumem audiamque Hiberum
narrantem loca facta, nationes,
ut mos est tuus, applicansque collum
iucundum os oculosque suaviabor.
O quantum est hominum beatiorum,
quid me laetius est beatiusve?

5

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¹ happy news² blessed

A BAD MOMENT WITH VARUS AND HIS GIRL

Varus me² meus ad suos amores
visum duxerat e foro otiosum
scortillum (ut mihi tum repente visum est) repente = immediate
non sane illepidum neque invenustum; invenustus = unattractive
huc ut venimus, incidere nobis d³
sermones varii, in quibus quid esset
iam Bithynia, quo modo se haberet,
et quonam mihi profuisset aere⁴ aes = money
Respondi id quod erat: nihil neque ipsis ipsis = to the natives
nec praetoribus esse nec cohorti,
cur quisquam caput unctius referret:
praesertim quibus esset irrumator irrumator = abject with
praetor nec faceret pili cohortem
"At certe tamen," inquit "quod illic
natum dicitur esse, comparasti nascor = originate
ad lecticam homines." Ego (ut puellae = dat.
unum me facerem beatiorum)
"Non" inquam "mihi tam fuit maligne, maligne = poorly, spitefully
ut, provincia quod mala incidisset,
non possem octo homines parare rectos." rectus = straight
(fractum qui veteris pedem) grabatū
in collo sibi collocare posset.)
Hic illa, ut decuit cinaediorum, cinaedus = lewd person.
"Quaeso," inquit "mihi, mi Catulle, paulum → for a bit
istos commodas: nam volo ad Serapim
deferri." "Mane," inquit puellae,
"istud quod modo dixeram (me habere) ...
fugit me ratio: meus sodalis — sodalis = amicus
Cinna est Gaius — is sibi paravit.
Verum utrum illius an mei, quid ad me?
Utor tam bene quam mihi pararim.
Sed tu insulsa male et molesta visis,
per quam non licet esse neglegentem!"

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30

twice is used idiomatically
for 'to be'
² his lover
³ more oiled head
⁴ he made (valued) the short as of a hair

A: Libos were original
from Bithynia. No one
got married, but you do
afford to earn a little
with six men Catull
has and says he
got caught

* A MESSAGE FOR LESBIA

Furi et Aureli, comites Catulli,
sive in extremos penetrabit Indos,
litus ut longē resonante Eoā
tunditur unda,

sive in Hyrcanos Arabasve molles,
seu Sagas sagittiferosve Parthos,
sive quae septemgeminus colorat
aequora Nilus,

sive trans altas gradietur Alpes,
Caesaris visens monimenta magni,
Gallicum Rhenum, horrible aequor ulti-
mosque Britannos,

omnia haec, quaecumque feret voluntas
caelitum, temptare simul parati,
pauca nuntiate meae puellae
non bona dicta:

cum suis vivat valeatque moechis,
quos simul complexa tenet trecentos,
nullum amans vere, sed identidem omnium
ilia rumpens;

nec meum respectet, ut ante, amorem,
qui illius culpā cecidit velut prati
ultimi flos, praetereunte postquam
tactus aratro est.

¹ Eastern² seven-mouthed

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* TO A NAPKIN THIEF

Marrucine Asini, manu sinistra
non belle uteris, in ioco atque vino:
tollis lintea neglegentiorum.
Hoc salsum esse putas? Fugit te, inepte:
quamvis sordida res et invenusta est. ^{invenusta = uncool}
Non credis mihi? Crede Pollioni
fratri, qui tua furta vel talento
mutari velit; est enim leporum
differtus puer ac facetiarum.
Quare aut hendecasyllabos trecentos
exspecta, aut mihi lintheum remitte,
quod non (me movet aestimatione)
verum est mnemosynum mei sodalis.
Nam sudaria Saetaba ex Hiberis
miserunt mihi muneri Fabullus
et Veranius; haec amem necesse est
ut Veraniolum meum et Fabullum.

¹ use well² does not move me with value (not worth much)³ det. reference (as a gift)

* INVITATION *

Cenabis bene, mi Fabulle, apud me
[paucis, si tibi di favent, diebus]—
si tecum attuleris bonam atque magnam
cenam, non sine candida puella
et vino et sale et omnibus cachinnis;
haec si, inquam, attuleris, venuste noster,
cenabis bene; nam tui Catulli
plenus sacculus est aranearum.
Sed contra accipies meros amores,
seu quid suavius elegantiusve est:
nam unguentum dabo, quod meae puellae
donarunt Veneres Cupidinesque;
quod tu cum olfacies, deos rogabis,
[totum ut te faciant, Fabulle, nasum.]

¹ in return² or if anything

10

15

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(85)
ODI ET AMO

Odi et amo.² Quare id faciam, fortasse requiris.
Nescio, sed fieri sentio et excrucior.

¹ indirect speech with fio, - "to happen"
² whereby (iF)

(86)
QUINTIA VS. LESBIA

proper — Quintia formosa est multis. Mihi candida, longa,
recta est: haec ego sic singula confiteor.
(Totum illud formosa) nego: nam nulla venustas,
nulla in tam magno est corpore mica salis.
Lesbia formosa est, quae cum pulcerrima tota est,
tum omnibus una omnis surripuit Veneres.

¹ "separately" / "individually"
² accusative (-Ts) plural
³ Veneres = "attractions"
⁴ "that that whole thing is 'beauty'"
⁵ subject is Lesbia

87
SUPREME LOVE

Nulla potest mulier tantum¹ se dicere amatam²
verè, quantum a me Lesbia amata mea est.
Nulla fides ullo fuit umquam foedere tanta,
quanta in amore tuo ex parte reperta mea est.

¹ tantum... quantum = so much... as much as

² supply 'esse'

a verb... in the...
... etc.

91
TO GELLIUS

Non ideo, Gelli, sperabam te mihi fidum
in misero hoc nostro, hoc perduto amore fore,
quod te cognossem bene constantemve putarem
aut posse a turpi mentem inhibere probro;
sed neque quod matrem nec germanam esse videbam
hanc tibi, cuius me magnus edebat amor.
Et quamvis tecum multo coniungerer usu,
non satis id causae credideram esse tibi.
Tu satis id duxti: tantum tibi gaudium in omni
culpa est, in quacumque est aliquid sceleris.

5

10

92
LESBIA'S ABUSE

Lesbia mi dicit semper male nec tacet umquam
de me: Lesbia [me dispeream] nisi amat.
Quo signo? Quia sunt totidem mea: deprecor illam
assidue, verum dispeream nisi amo.

¹ deprecor, -ari, -atus sum = to beg ³ subject of 'amat'
² infernal hortatory subjunctive

93
TO HELL WITH CAESAR

Nil nimium studeo, Caesar, tibi velle placere,
nec scire utrum sis albus an ater homo.

¹ infinitive form of 'volo' ² studeo - to be eager

94
MENTULA THE PRICK

Mentula moechatur. Moechatur mentula? Certe.
Hoc est quod dicunt: ipsa olera olla legit.

⁵ mentula, -ae, f.
- male sexual
organ

¹ moechor, -ari, -atus sum = to commit adultery

² from oleris, oleris, n. - vegetable

³ olla, -ae, f. - pot/jar

80

⁴ This is an idiomatic phrase in Latin that is akin to
"The Pope Catholic?" it's a sarcastic response to an obvious statement

108
A SCOUNDREL'S CORPSE

Si, Comini, populi arbitrio tua cana senectus
spurcata impuris moribus intereat,
non equidem dubito quin primum inimica bonorum
lingua exsecta avido sit data vulturio,
effossos oculos voret atro gutture corvus,
intestina canes, cetera membra lupi.

5

109
IF IT COULD ONLY BE

Lucundum, mea vita, mihi proponis amorem
hunc nostrum inter nos perpetuumque fore.
Di magni, facite ut vere promittere possit,
atque id sincerè dicat et ex animo,
ut liceat nobis tota perducere vita
aeternum hoc sanctae foedus amicitiae.

5

110
TO A CHEAT

Aufillena, bonae semper laudantur amicae:
accipiunt pretium, quae facere instituunt.
Tu, quod promisti, mihi quod mentita inimica es,
quod nec das et fers saepe, facis facinus.
Aut facere ingenuae est, aut non promisse pudicae,
Aufillena, fuit: sed data corripere
fraudando officiis, plus quam meretricis avarae est
quae sese toto corpore prostituit.

5

111
WORSE THAN A CHEAT

Aufillena, viro contentam vivere solo,
nuptarum laus ex laudibus eximiis:
sed cuius quamvis potius succumbere par est,
quam matrem fratres concipere ex patruo.

112
A LOT OF MAN

Multus homo es, Naso, neque tecum multus homo est quin
te scindat: Naso, multus es et pathicus.

113
A LOT OF MEN

Consule Pompeio primum duo, Cinna, solebant
Maeciliam: facto consule nunc iterum
manserunt duo, sed creverunt milia in unum
singula. Fecundum semen adulterio.

114
MENTULA'S ESTATE

Firmano saltu non falso Mentula dives
fertur, qui tot res in se habet egregias,
aucupium omne genus, piscis, prata, arva ferasque.
nequiquam: fructus sumptibus exsuperat.
Quare concedo sit dives, dum omnia desint.
Saltum laudemus, dum modo ipse egeat.

5

1 *Phaselus*: a light passenger ship, named after the Greek bean pod (φάσηλις) and built for speed. Catullus implies that he bought this bark or even had it built, since he calls himself its *erus* (19) and tells of its construction and retirement after a single uneventful journey. *hospites* corresponds to the Greek epigram's address to the passing stranger, thus indicating how we are to take the poem that follows.

2 *ait* sets up the indirect statement that will dominate all but the last three lines of the poem. It is renewed by *negat* (6), *ait* (15), and *dicat* (16). *celerrimus* would in regular Latin usage be *celerimum* in indirect statement. The copyist regularized his text accordingly, but we know from an ancient parody of this line that Catullus wrote *celerrimus*, following a usage that is rare in classical Latin. The gender of the adjective follows that of *phaselus*.

3–4 *neque ... nequisse*, like *negat ... negare* (6–7), is litotic, expressing the positive idea forcefully, viz. the hyperbolic boast that it was the fastest little ship in the world, surpassing the rush of any floating boat. A *trabs* is any tree trunk or timber, by metonymy (from the keel timber) a boat. *nequisse*: perf. infinitive of *nequeo*, completed by *praeterire*; it was not incapable of surpassing. *palmulis*: virtually a hapax legomenon, occurring only here and in line 17; dim. for *palma*, an oar-blade. With its play on "palm" of the hand, the word choice (instead of *remis*) fits the personification of the bark.

5 *foret* is generally used instead of *futurus esset* in verse. *linleo*: linen cloth, here a canvas sail.

6 *hoc* refers to the speed claimed in the preceding sentence; it is the object of *negare* in the next line. The ship denies (*negat*) that a list of five places on its itinerary—the Adriatic coast, the Cycladic islands, Rhodes, Thracian Propontis, and the Pontic coast—deny (*negare*) its speed. Catalogues of place-names have been a favorite topic of poetry since Homer's Catalogue of Ships and their places of origin in the *Iliad*.

8 *Thraciam* is adjectival, agreeing with the Greek accusative *Propontida*. The reference is to the Sea of Marmora between the Black Sea (*Ponticum sinum*) and the Aegean.

10 *iste post phaselus*: this future bark. *post* is not the preposition but the adverb, used as an adjective. Previously it was leafy forest, afterwards a boat.

11 *Cytorio*: adjectival again, like *Thraciam* (8). The ridge south of Cytorus that runs along the southern coast was well forested in antiquity and provided lumber for shipbuilding. For Catullus, its dark forests, transferred to the Troad, provided the sinister atmosphere in which he set his story of Attis (poem 63).

12 *loquente ... coma*: instrumental abl. The "speaking" of rustling leaves was a traditional metaphor.

13 *Amastri*: vocative. The third sentence is an apostrophe to the ports where the bark grew up (as trees) and became a boat. *Amastri* was the capital of Paphlagonia, part of Bithynia. *buxifer*: Catullus usually avoids such epic compounds except in his long poems. Cytorus, famous for its boxwood, is so mentioned by Virgil, Pliny, and Strabo.

18 *impotentia*: wild; the seas are helpless to restrain their own violence. Cf. 35.12, *impotente amore*.

19 *erum*: Catullus is not just a passenger, but the ship's master, as if it were a living servant.

20–21 *Iuppiter ... pedem*. Poetic language calls weather "Jupiter"; a *Iuppiter secundus* (from *sequor*) is a following wind that falls equally on either sheet (*utrumque pedem* refers to the lines or sheets that secure the lower corners of a square sail). The ancient ship, like all square-riggers, could sail a beam reach or a broad reach, but it could not tack upwind like a modern sailboat. *incidisset*: from *incido* fall upon, not *incido* cut into.

22 *vota*: The bark was so seaworthy that no frightened vows were made to the shore gods during heavy weather. Survivors of storm or shipwreck made votive offerings at seaside shrines, sometimes with epigrams telling about the crisis they escaped.

23 *sibi*: dative of advantage, on its behalf.

23–24 *mari novissimo*: the journey's final sea on the journey from Bithynia to the Po valley would be the Adriatic. See map. *hunc ... lacum* may be the Lago di Garda near Catullus' home.

27 *gemelle*: dim. of *geminæ*. A final apostrophe to the Dioscuri, patrons of mariners and twin stars. Castor's twin Pollux was the lesser of the two.

Love's euphoria, defiant of scandal and envy but a bit superstitious. Composed of three triads and a

final quatrain, it is said to reflect the careless joy of Catullus' first fling with Lesbia.

Meter: hendecasyllabics.

3 *omnes unius*: strictly speaking, oxymoron is the juxtaposition of opposite words applied to the same thing, e.g., loveless love. The term is sometimes applied loosely to any emphatic juxtaposition of opposites whether or not they state a paradox, as here. *unius assis*: gen. of value with *aestimemus*, introducing a bookkeeping theme to be resumed in lines 10–11. The *i* of *unius*, normally long, may be short in verse (as here). An *as* is a coin of negligible value, like a penny.

4–6 The you-only-live-once argument was already an old favorite in love poetry. *soles ... lux*: there are many days but only one brief "light" for us; the monosyllabic line ending is rare and emphatic. The adversative asyndeton with *nobis* (see *asyndeton* in appendix C) emphasizes the contrast between the renewability of days and our own human nonrenewability. *dormienda* with *nox est* expresses ineluctable necessity; the periphrastic construction takes the dative of agent *nobis*. Passive in Latin, it is best paraphrased as an active in English, We must sleep.

7–10 Close repetitions of words are a hallmark of Catullus' style. *mille*, *deinde* (or *dein*), and *centum* are the elements of a playful sequence where form imitates content.

10 *fecerimus*: the future perfect indicative with a long *i*, normal in Cicero, occurs here in verse for the first time.

11 *conturbabimus*: throw [the accounts] into confusion: borrowed (like *fecerimus* above) from bookkeeping jargon, this introduces a touch of superstition: what we don't know won't hurt us and can't be used against us.

12 *invidere*: more superstition. *In-video* in its original sense means to "look upon" with the evil eye and thus bewitch.

Like Catullus in poem 5, Flavius is up to his ears in some hot new affair. The poet uses cynical banter to provoke his friend into telling all. The poem's coarseness makes fun of Hellenistic love epigrams in which a guest at a symposium is discovered to be in love (Asclepiades GP 18, Callimachus GP 12–13).

Meter: hendecasyllabics.

1 *Flavi*: calling him by his family name adds a note of mock solemnity. *delicias tuas*, like *tuos amores* at the end (16), refers to a single girlfriend; cf. *deliciae* in 2.1 and 3.4.

2–3 *ni sint ... velles*: unless she were hopelessly gauche, you'd be willing to talk. The mixture of subjunctive tenses is unorthodox.

4–5 *Verum*: but in fact. *nescio quid ... scorti*: partitive gen., some kind of girlie; for the idiom, see note on 2.6. A *scortum* is a "skin," slang for anyone available for a price. Moreover, she is *febriculosa*, feverish, not the cool, fashionable type one would introduce socially. The personal ending of *nescio* is short in poetry.

6 *non viduas*: not celibate. The ironic understatement (*litotes*) highlights the way Flavius has been spending his nights.

7 *neququam tacitum*: the bed is a vainly tacit witness because although it cannot speak it squeaks loudly. See appendix C, conceit. As often in poetry, the singular *clamat* has several subjects, including *cubile*, *pulvinus*, *argutatio*, *inambulatio*. 80.7f., *clamant ... ilia et ... labra*, is more grammatically correct.

8 *sertis*: *serta*, -orum, n (from *sero*) are woven festoons of flowers; Flavius has spared no effort to make things perfect with garlands of fresh flowers and aromatic olive oil from Syria. This contrasts with the noisy bed and tousled pillow.

9 *peraeque*: each pillow has been equally mussed, indicating (a) two occupants in the bed and (b) wide-ranging amatory activities.

10 *tremuli*: the feeble bed is no match for its occupants.

11 *inambulatio* renews the personification of *clamat* (7): the bed wiggles so violently it actually seems to walk around the bedroom.

12 *nil stupra ... tacere = nil valet stupra tacere*: mock righteousness about Flavius' "abominations." The belief that evil always comes to light is widespread: "Foul deeds will rise, though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes." *Ham.* I ii 257f.

13 *latera ecfututa*: loosely, a body exhausted by sexual excess.

pandas, from *pando*, -ere: spread out or display.

13–14 *pandas ... facias*: use of the present instead of the imperfect subjunctive in a contrary-to-fact condition is an archaizing poetic usage.

14 *quid ... ineptiarum*: some kind of hanky-panky; another indefinite partitive gen. (cf. 4).

The phrase is comic anticlimax: these orgies are worse than immoral, they are inept—but Catullus' final words on the matter (15–17) make it clear that the affair itself will be perfectly acceptable as soon as Flavius opens up about it.

16 *volo*: the short final vowel is the result of iambic shortening, a feature of colloquial Latin that pronounced an iambic disyllable (*vōlō*) as a pyrrhic (*vōlō*).

17 *ad caelum ... vocare*: that is, to immortalize.

7

A sequel to poem 5, this measures Lesbia's kisses not by the decimal system but by grains of sand and stars, which as traditional metaphors of infinity make his love less vulnerable to evil spells.

Meter: hendecasyllabics.

1 *basiationes* are mock-pompous kissifications.

2 *tuae*: subjective. As in 5.7 *da mi basia mille*, Lesbia is doing the kissing.

4 *lasarpiciferis ... Cyrenis* is more magniloquence, making fun of the learned Hellenistic allusiveness of his sand metaphor. The fancy-sounding compound (see note on 4.13 *buxifer*) refers to silphium or *laserpicium*, a fennel-like plant whose resin was exported from Cyrene. According to ancient authorities, this "Cyrenaic juice" was an effective contraceptive. The case is locative; the plural *Cyrenis* refers to the territory around Cyrene, i.e., Cyrenaica.

5 *oraculum* (= *oraculum*): the oracular temple of Egyptian Ammon, whom the Romans identified with Jove. The god, once consulted by Alexander the Great, is sweltering (*aestuosi*) in the desert heat on the southern frontier of Cyrenaica.

6 *Batti ... sepulcrum*: the tomb of the first king of Cyrene was in the middle of this North African capital, more than 300 miles from the oracle mentioned in line 5.

9 *te*: accus. subject of *basiare*. As in lines 1–2, Catullus is calling for kisses from Lesbia, seen throughout this poem as the dominant or more active partner.

11–12 *quae ... possint*: subjunctive in a relative clause of purpose: so that busybodies (*curiosi* are worse than curious, they are meddlesome) won't be able to count them out. *mala ... lingua* with a short final *a* is the second subject of *possint*. *fascinare* is to put a *fascinum* or spell on somebody; one was thought especially vulnerable to a

fascinum during moments of great happiness (cf. note on 61.120). A common rule of magic is that if you have exact information about a person you can better invoke a curse. When Odysseus reveals his name to Polyphemus in Homer's *Odyssey*, the Cyclops is able to ask his father Poseidon for revenge.

8

A sensible Catullus tries to reason with a Catullus devastated by a breakup in his affair with Lesbia. In these lines he considers his foolishness and urges himself to tough it out (*obdura*, 11, cf. 12, 19). The firm position he is determined to adopt contrasts with the prevalent mood of humiliation and pathos. One of Catullus' masterpieces, with an interesting antecedent in Menander *Sam.* 350–56.

Meter: limping iambics (see appendix B) reinforce the grief and awkwardness (*ineptire*, 1) expressed by the language. Punctuation at the end of all but two of the poem's nineteen lines follows the heavy end-stopping of Catullus' phrasing: the lines come haltingly. This poem's conversational quality benefits from the correspondence of prose accent and metrical emphasis at the end of each line: *ineptire*, *ducas*, *sóles*, *ducébat*, etc.

1 *miser*: a favorite word of Catullus, occurring (with its cognates) 42 times in the poems. Besides general wretchedness, it connotes intense erotic love (51.5, 99.11 and 15, 64.71 and 140; cf. *misellus* at 35.14, 45.21). Its position here is emphatic, its meaning complex.

1–2 *desinas, ducas*: the jussive subjunctive is less blunt than the imperative. Catullus is remonstrating with himself: you must stop being a jerk and realize that it's all over. *ducas*, consider, governs the indirect statement *perditum* [esse], the subject of which is *quod vides perisse*. The juxtaposition *perisse perditum* emphasizes the perceived finality of the breakup.

3, 8 *fulsere* is the alternative form of pf. *fulserunt*.

4 *ventitabas*: iterative form 'of *veniebas* to emphasize the frequency with which Lesbia led Catullus around; Catullus has been a bit of a puppy, which must have been boring for Lesbia. *quo* is the adverb: where, to what place, whither.

5 *amata ... quantum amabitur nulla* is repeated in 37.12, paraphrased in 58.3. Catullus freely

admits the obsessive quality of his love, which renders him more vulnerable than philosophic.

9 *Nunc iam*: the redundancy has a once-and-for-all finality. *impotens*: self-reproachful, "helpless," unable to control his despair; weak, lacking self control.

10 *quae*: sc. *illam*. Don't pursue her who flies from you (a tag from Theocritus 11.75, where the nymph Galatea is avoiding the Cyclops Polyphemus). *sectare* is the imperative of the deponent *sector*, iterative of *sequor*. As in line 4 (the iterative *ventitabas*), Catullus berates his puppy instinct: Don't keep following her around! Catullus needs to regain his self-respect.

12 *Vale*: a defiant apostrophe to Lesbia that continues to 18, where the poet tries to persuade himself that the loss will be Lesbia's more than his own.

13 *invitam*: adverbial force with understood *te*: when you are unwilling or against your wishes.

14 *rogaberis nulla* is a colloquial emphatic negative: you will not be asked out at all.

15 *Scelesta* mixes scorn and pity: You sorry wretch!

15–18 *Quae ... Quis ... Cui ... Quem ... Cuius ... Quem ... Cui*: the obsession takes over as Catullus imagines what she won't be doing with him, but reveals his jealous worry about new lovers. The Greeks called this run through the forms of a word *polyptoton* (see appendix C).

19 *destinatus*: adverbial, from *destino*: determined, stubborn. *obdura*: having started with a jussive subjunctive (*desinas*), Catullus ends with a blunt imperative.

9

Veranius (see appendix A) has just returned from a tour of duty in Spain, much to the delight of Catullus. The triple repetition of *beatus* (lines 5, 10, 11) helps establish the mood.

Meter: hendecasyllabics.

1 *omnibus*: dat. ind. object of *antistans*; *meis amicis*: abl. object of prep. *e*: surpassing all my friends.

2 *millibus trecentis*: best taken with *amicis* as extravagant hyperbole: even if Catullus had 300,000 friends, Veranius would still be number one.

5 *nuntii beati*: a nom. pl. exclamation, like the exclamatory accusative.

8 *mos ... tuus*: Catullus fondly remembers his friend's interest in people and places, and his lively talk. *applicans*: with middle or reflexive force, attaching myself to.

9 *suaviabor*: the deponent *suavior*, kiss, is related to *suavis*, *persuadeo*, and our *sweet*. Among the physically demonstrative Romans, Catullus is particularly enthusiastic. This is more than the usual Mediterranean peck on the cheek.

10 *quantum ... beatiorum*: as in 3.2 (see note).

11 *quid* is colloquial, like the preceding phrase, and more sweeping than *quis*: not "who" but "what [of all possible people or things]?" Cf. the hyperbole with which the poem began.

10

Catullus' folly gets the better of him once again (as in poem 8), this time with more comic results. The time is spring or summer of 56 B.C.; Catullus is just back from his administrative tour of duty in Bithynia (line 7); Varus, finding him in the Forum with time on his hands, invites him up to see his new mistress. When conversation turns to Bithynia and the graft that provincial officials were expected to extort from the natives, Catullus tries to save face with Varus' foxy mistress by claiming to have brought back eight of the litter bearers for which the region was famous. With feigned innocence, the unnamed lady (Fraenkel calls her "a drawing-room Nemesis") asks to borrow them for a visit to a local temple—thereby exposing his bluff and causing Catullus great annoyance.

Meter: hendecasyllabics.

1 *amores*: plural for singular, like *deliciae* in 2.1 and 3.4.

2 *visum*: supine in *-um*, expressing purpose.

3 *scortillum*: dim. of *scortum* (see 6.5). His exasperation rises when he thinks of her: a chippie or bimette, but classy enough (line 4) that he tells a flimsy lie to impress her.

4 *non ... illepidum, invenustum*: the double negatives lend litotic emphasis, making Catullus' subsequent blunder all the more embarrassing. *Lepidus* and *venustus* are standard jargon for whatever Catullus and his circle considered elegant.

5 *huc* is probably her place, as this woman is likely a demimondaine (like Ipsitilla in Poem 32) with her own apartment. *incidere*: perfect indicative; the *sermones* (topics of conversation) came up casually.

6–8 *esset, haberet, profuisset*: subjunctives in indirect question depending on the questioning implied in *incidere ... sermones*. They progress from the general to the particular, viz. what was in it for Catullus. *quonam ... aere*: the suffix *-nam* indicates that this, last but not least, was the point of the subject.

9 *ipsis* (dat. of reference with *nihil ... esse*) are the natives themselves. Nobody was getting rich in Bithynia.

10 *praetoribus*: governors sent to administer (and loot) Bithynia, the latest of whom was C. Memmius, under whom Catullus served. *cohorti*: the staff on which Catullus served.

11 *cur ... referret*: indirect question or indirect dependent clause depending on *nihil ... esse* above: there was no reason why, etc. *caput unctius*: a better oiled head (like an oiled palm) belongs to someone who has made a profit. Heads were oiled on holidays and celebrations, hence a second meaning: nobody had anything to celebrate.

12 *quibus* is dat. of possession with *esset*; it is compressed from *eis quibus*, continuing the datives of reference *ipsis ... praetoribus ... cohorti* in lines 9–10. *irrumator*: someone who forces others to give him oral sex, hence one who treats people with contempt. The obscene epithet is substituted for the name of C. Memmius. See also 28.10 (to Memmius), *tota ista trabe lentus irrumasti*.

13 *pili* is gen. of value with *faceret*: Memmius reckoned his cohort as worth less than a hair. This figure of speech plays off an earlier figure, *caput unctius* (11).

14 *quod* refers to the use of *ad lecticam homines* (16).

14–27 *inquiunt, inquam* (18), and *inquit* (25) are historical presents for dramatic effect; the perfect *inquit* (27) puts a stop to this embarrassing series of questions and answers.

17 *unum* has adverbial force: particularly.

19 *quod*: the adverb with concessive force, granted that. *incidisset*: fell to my lot.

22 *grabati*: cot. Catullus assumes the role of the penniless poet. He not only lacks litter bearers, but the only bed he claims to own is a crippled little pallet with a broken foot. This is, of course, nonsense coming from a man of Catullus' wealth, but poverty is the usual pose of anyone who assumes the mantle of the poet.

24 *hic*: at this point; Varus' girlfriend gets a bright idea, for which she is rewarded with the epithet *cinaediorum*, comp. of the adj. *cinaedus*, usually applied to a passive homosexual male or catamite. Here loosely used, meaning that her remark is what you would expect of a more unsavory type. *deciuit*: perfect of the impersonal *deceat*. 26–27 *commoda* and *mane*, imperatives with short final vowel, reflect colloquial usage, as does the dramatizing hiatus after *mane* (Wait...). *ad Serapim*: i.e., to the temple of the Egyptian god Serapis in Rome, where people went to be cured of their ailments. Whatever ails Varus' mistress, she wants to go across town in style. The reference helps to characterize her as a working girl: there had been popular agitation in 58 B.C. for shrines of Isis and Serapis on the Capitoline hill, which the Senate resisted.

28–30 Like the hiatus after *mane*, the short, broken phrases reflect the embarrassed Catullus groping for an excuse why he cannot produce the eight litter bearers.

28 *istud*: acc. of specification, antecedent of *quod*, as for that which.... The eight (imaginary) litter bearers are compressed into a neuter singular.

29 *fugit me ratio*: I made a mistake, it slipped my mind.

30 *Cinna est Gaius*: *Gaius* is trisyllabic here; Catullus stammers out the name backwards: *Cinna*—*Gaius Cinna*, that is—, a poet and politician who seems from this passage to have served with Catullus in Bithynia. See appendix A.

32 *tam bene quam*: sc. *si*. The feeble lie is that Catullus uses these litter bearers as readily as if he had gotten them for himself. *para(ve)rim*: for subjunctive in clauses of comparison, see Allen & Greenough §524.

33 *insulsa male ... vivis* is colloquial and idiomatic: you're stupid, nasty, and a pain in the neck. For *vivis* = *es*, cf. 89.2 *vivat*, 107.7 *vivit*. The compound *in-sulsa* (from *sal-*, salt) associates salt with wit. This floozy is supposedly too stupid to understand a joke—but of course the joke is on Catullus.

Catullus asks *Furius* and *Aurelius* to tell "my girl"—undoubtedly *Lesbia*—that he will have nothing more to do with her: she is promiscuous

and careless of his love. The poem is usually understood as a final repudiation of *Lesbia*. A persistent problem in its analysis has been the relation of the first three stanzas to the final two: what does the elaborate catalog of places have to do with the message for *Lesbia*?

Meter: Sapphic strophe (see appendix B).

1 *comites* is ironic, to judge from the poet's treatment of *Furius* and *Aurelius* in other poems (see appendix A). They are despised errand boys (like *Hamlet's Rosenkrantz* and *Guildestern*), addressed with elaborate civility in four stanzas.

2 *sive* begins a romantic catalogue of places where *Furius* and *Aurelius* will be his *comites*: whether he goes to *India*, or *Hyrkania*, or *Arabia*, etc. *penetrabit*: Catullus refers to himself in the third person.

3 *ut*: where (as in 17.10). *eoā* is the adjective, with *unda*: the Eastern wave, named after the dawn goddess *Eos*.

5 *Hyrkanos*: the *Hyr cani* lived along the south shore of the *Caspian Sea*. The *Arabas* (acc. pl.) are *molles* by virtue of their luxurious exports.

6 *Sagas* are the nomadic *Sacae* of northern Iran. The *Parthians* bordered the Roman Empire on the east in *Asia Minor*; their archery rendered them especially dangerous to the Romans.

7 The Nile is called *septemgeminus* because of its seven mouths, which colored the nearby sea with its muddy waters.

10 *visens* is the iterative (*video, vis- + -so > viso*), going to see the *monimenta* of *Caesar's* recent exploits in *Gaul* and *Britain*: the *Rhine*, the *horribile aequor* (either the *Rhine* or the *English Channel*), and the *Britons*. Since these incursions happened in 55 B.C., we have a *terminus post quem* for this poem. This is the only passage where Catullus makes honorific mention of *Caesar*, whom he had formerly lampooned. See appendix A, *Caesar*.

11 *horribile aequor*: Haupt's emendation for the manuscript's *horribilesque*. Two elisions speed up Catullus' catalogue near its end.

11–12 *ulti-mosque* is hypermetric (see appendix C), perhaps to add more haste to the end of the catalogue.

13 *omnia haec*, obj. of *temptare*, closes off the catalogue which occupied the first half of the poem.

14 *caelitum* (gen. pl. of *caeles*) is stately and archaic, like "the heavenly host."

15 *meae puellae* recalls the happier days of 2.1 and 3.3–4.

17 *moechis*, adulterers, breaks the pattern of lofty language set in the first four stanzas.

18–19 *simul trecentos ... identidem*: disgusted exaggeration. She not only embraces 300 at a time, but she exhausts them, "breaking" their *ilia* or loins again and again. For the use of 300 as formulaic for any large number, cf. 12.10, 29.14, 48.3. The last syllable of *omnium* is hypermetric.

20 *ilia rumpens*: cf. 80.7f., *rupta ... ilia*.

21 *respectet*: hortatory or jussive subjunctive, as on line 17. She is not to count on his love any longer.

22 *qui*, etc: his love is compared to a wildflower casually uprooted by a passing plow. *cecidit*: pf. of *cado*. *prati ultimi*: gen., at the edge of a field; the elision of *prati* is hypermetric.

24 *tactus* emphasizes how easily *Lesbia's* callous promiscuity has destroyed his feelings of love: just a touch was enough. Her *culpa* has all the compassion of an iron plow.

A piece of occasional verse, ostensibly to embarrass *Asinius Marrucinus* (see appendix A) for filching a napkin of sentimental value. The main purpose, though, may have been to pay compliments to *Pollio* (6–9), *Fabullus*, and *Veranius*, and the napkin thief gets off with a lighter rebuke than the one served up to *Thallus* in poem 25.

Meter: hendecasyllabics.

1 *sinistra*: the hand used in dirty work.

2 *belle*: the dim. again, as in 3.14; *ioco atque vino*: hendiadys, as in 50.6, *per iocum atque vinum*.

3 *tollis*: lift, a thinly veiled euphemism for "steal"; *lintea*: any linens, identifiable from the preceding line as table napkins. All Europeans ate with their fingers until the introduction of forks in the 15th century.

4 *salsum*: in 10.33 *Varus' lady friend* is rebuked as *insulsa*, stupid. Its opposite here is "clever." *Fugit te* leaves the subject unexpressed; cf. 10.29 *fugit me ratio* and the colloquial ellipsis "You're out of it."

5 *quamvis sordida*: as tacky as you like, i.e., extremely shabby or sordid. *invenusta* (cf. Eng. "uncool") was likely a popular term with Catullus and his circle of Roman sophisticates: it appears three times in Catullus, *venustus* seven times.

8 *mutari velit*: Pollio would like (potential subj.) his brother's *furta* changed or undone even (intensive *vel*) at the cost of a talent (abl. of price), which is a lot of Greek money.

9 *facetiarum*: gen. with word of plenty, *differtus* (stuffed). Pollio is a man of real wit (*facetae*), who knows that swiping napkins is a poor excuse for a joke.

10 *hendecasyllabos*, the satirical policemen of high society, nearly personified here, are fully personified in poem 42.

12 *aestimatione*: value, as regularly in legal Latin. Before machine looms, any woven fabric was quite expensive. Cf. introductory notes on poems 25 and 33.

12–13 *non ... verum*: the conjunction is stronger than *sed*: To the contrary, it's a souvenir.... *mnemosynum*, a Greek word found only here in Latin, was no doubt a fashionable loan word in Catullus' circle. Catullus and the *poetae novi* generally avoided language borrowed from Greek.

14 *sudaria* applies to any napkins or handkerchiefs used to wipe away sweat (*sudor*). *Saetaba*, the adjective, from *Saetabis* (mod. Jativa) in *Tarraconensis* (cf. mod. Tarragon), where the Spanish produced the best linen in Europe.

15 *muneris*, for a gift, is a dative of purpose in a double dative construction (see appendix C).

16 *amen*: *necesse est* often governs a subjunctive result clause without *ut*.

15–17 *Fabullus et Veranius, Veraniolum*: See appendix A. Catullus repeats the names with affectionate emphasis, altering the order for variety and adding a diminutive suffix, Veranius baby. *Fabullus* is the dim. of *Fabius* (cf. *faba*, "bean").

13

Catullus half jokingly invites *Fabullus*, perhaps recently returned from Spain (see poem 12 and appendix A), to bring a date to a dinner party. Pleading poverty, he promises to supply everything but food, wine, wit, and a *candida puella* to provide entertainment. Eleven elisions give the poem a casual rapidity.

Meter: hendecasyllabics.

1 *apud me*, like French *chez moi*, is idiomatic: at my place.

2 *paucis ... diebus*: the vagueness of the invitation is part of the joke, as is the parenthetical

qualification *si tibi di favent*. The hyperbaton or artificial separation of *paucis* from *diebus* adds to the humor.

4 The separation of *cenam* from *magnam* by line end has an effect similar to the hyperbaton in line 2. The separation by line ending of two words closely related by syntax is enjambment; contrast the strong end-stopping of lines 2 and 5, and the slight end-stopping of 1 and 4. The double negative (litotes) of *non sine* is slightly poetical and more emphatic than if he had written *cum*. *candida*: a pale skin was considered a mark of great beauty—and a privileged lifestyle that did not require exposure to the elements.

5 *sale* plays on two meanings, salt and wit; cf. 10.33 *insulsa* and 12.4 *salsum*. Besides food, *Fabullus* will have to bring everything else that makes a dinner party successful.

8 *plenus ... aranearum*: hyperbaton again. For the gen. construction, cf. 12.9 *leporum differtus*.

9 *meros amores*: in return (*contra*) for the fixings, *Fabullus* will receive something he will absolutely love, or undiluted affection. *Amores* in Catullus usually means girlfriend (e.g. 6.16, 10.1), but *Fabullus* will already have a *candida puella*, so this word raises a new expectation. There is another pun in *meros*: wine unmixed with water was called *merum*.

10 *seu quid*, like *aut si quid* in 22.13 and 82.2, is a breezy wave of the hand: you'll get *meros amores* or whatever (indef. pron. *quid*) is even better.

11 *nam* explains what Catullus is promising.

12 *donarunt*: for *donaverunt*; syncope of verb forms is common in Latin poetry. *Veneres Cupidinesque*, as in 3.1, are everything that makes *Lesbia* attractive. The idea is that the spirits of love conferred this aromatic oil on *Lesbia* as a special boon. The use of scents by men and women at a dinner party was a part of dressing up.

14 *totum ... nasum*: a final hyperbaton. The last word of a poem, especially a short one, is a position of special emphasis.

14

Catullus' friend *Licinius Calvus* has sent a book of bad poetry as a joke on the eve of the *Saturnalia*, when gifts were traditionally given. Since books were not mass produced but copied out by hand, one can infer that *Calvus* made an

anthology of the worst current poems he could find. Catullus uses the occasion to make fun of the scribblers of the moment.

Meter: hendecasyllabics.

1–3 *amarem ... odissem*: imperfect subjunctive, as usual in present contrary-to-fact conditions. *Calve*: see appendix A. *Vatiniano*: as in 53.2. I would hate you as much as *Vatinus* does—an oblique compliment to *Calvus* for his celebrated prosecution of *Vatinus* (see appendix A).

5 *tot* modifies *poetis*, *male* intensifies *perderes*.

6 *isti ... clienti*, that *cliens* of yours, implies that *Calvus* enclosed a note with the book purporting to explain how he had come by it in the first place: it was a thank-you gift from a client whom *Calvus* had defended in court. Catullus goes on to accuse *Sulla litterator* (line 9), perhaps a self-styled connoisseur known to them both, as the source of this literary white elephant.

7 *tantum ... impiorum*: partitive gen., so many scoundrels (the poets represented in the collection).

8 *novum ac repertum*: hendiadys, newly discovered.

10–11: an ironic comment, made with friendly malice: Catullus professes to be happy that *Calvus*' efforts on behalf of his *cliens* have not gone unrewarded.

12 *sacrum*: exclamatory acc.; this bad meaning of *sacer* derives from the forfeiture to a god of anything that offends divine law. The line may be a playfully ironic echo of the tribute to *Calvus* in 53.5: *Di magni, salaputium disertum!*

14 *mis(is)ti ... ut periret*: comic overstatement. *continuo*: without delay, on the same day you receive the gift. *die* is best understood with *optimo dierum*.

16 *hoc* refers to *Calvus*' joke on Catullus. *salse*: you joker! *sic*: that is, as a trick entirely at Catullus' expense. The sense of the idiomatic *tibi ... abibit* is: you won't get away with a joke like this.

17 *si luxerit*: a formula of pious caution (when, God willing), used with a touch of comic irony, implying that *Calvus*' waggish gift was such an atrocity that the sun might not even rise the next day.

17–18 *librarium ... scrinia*: the bookdealers' cylindrical cases in which the book scrolls were kept.

18 *Caesios, Aquinos*: generalizing plurals, contemptuously referring to such poets as those named.

19 *Suffenum*: see poem 22 and appendix A.

22 *pedem attulisti*: a common idiom for "came," with a pun on the metrical foot in poetry.

23 *saecli incommoda*: more comic overstatement: misfortunes of our age.

14b

This unattached fragment is all that remains of a poem that may have been meant to introduce the next group of poems in the collection.

Meter: hendecasyllabics.

1 *ineptiarum*: a self-deprecating reference to his poems, like *nugae* in 1.4. There is perhaps also a reference to the theme of *ineptiae* (instances of folly) in the poems which follow, 15–26.

3 *nobis*: i.e., to my poems.

15

Catullus entrusts his young boyfriend to *Aurelius*, but with comic misgivings that *Aurelius* will play fast and loose with him. The boy is probably *Juventus* (see appendix A). Like the Greeks, urban, Hellenized Romans saw nothing wrong with recreational sex of either type. There is some irony, however, in the repetition of *puentem, pudice, and pudenter* (2, 5, 13) in a poem that has so much fun with abuse and indecency.

Meter: hendecasyllabics.

1 *meos amores*: my boyfriend, as we learn from *puerum* in line 5. For this idiom cf. *tuos amores* (6.16) and *suos amores* (10.1), both in those cases referring to a girlfriend.

2 *Aureli*: see appendix A. The enjambment suggests wary distrust.

3 *cupi(vi)sti*: the usual syncope.

4 *castum ... et integellum* overstates the innocence of the boy for comic effect. *expeteres*: subjunctive in a relative clause of characteristic. The thought is: if you have ever wanted to keep something pure and inviolate for yourself, do the same for me.

6 *nihil*: an emphatic variant of *non*, as in 16.6.

8 *in re sua ... occupati*: minding their own business.

9 *a te metuo*: I fear danger from you.

11 *Quem* refers to *tuo ... pene* (9). *moveto*: fut. imperative, ply.

12 *paratum*: ready for business. We are invited to picture *Aurelius* as a satyr-like figure with a constant and insatiable erection. *foris* is emphatic: he

handsome enough to seduce his own sister, he has no friends willing to get close enough to exchange greetings.

80

The alleged sex maniac of poem 74 is back, this time as an oral sex artist. For more reliable information about this Gellius, see appendix A.

1 *Quid dicam quare*: How shall I explain why. *rosea ista labella* is sometimes taken as an indication of Gellius' youth; cf. 45.12, *illo purpureo ore*.

2 *fiant = sint*.

3-4 *te*: object of *suscitat*. *octava ... hora*: the period of daylight was divided into twelve *horae* that would be longer or shorter depending on the time of year. The eighth hour is two-thirds of the way through the day, just after siesta time. *quiete e molli*: from a gentle nap. *longo die*: lit. when the day is long. This has been variously interpreted to mean "in the long hours of the day" (Ellis), "well along in the day" (Merrill), or "in summer, when the daylight hours are longer" (Quinn).

6 *grandia ... tenta*: full-grown erections.

7 *clamant* has two subjects, Victor's *ilia* and Gellius' *labra*. Cf. the eloquent bed in 6.7, *cubile clamat*. *Victoris ... miselli*: an unknown sexual athlete. Cf. *misellus* in 45.21 and 35.14; here it is heavily ironic, as in 40.1.

8 Victor's *ilia* have been *rupta*, drained by the efforts of Gellius. For the diction, cf. 11.20, *ilia rumpens*, where *Lesbia* is the subject.

81

A stranger from Pisaurum has caught the eye of Catullus' boyfriend Juventius (see appendix A). Catullus professes to be concerned not that Juventius is involved with another man but that he made such a bad choice.

1 *in tanto populo*: i.e., Rome.

3 *moribunda ab sede Pisauri*: from the dying town of Pisaurum. On the Adriatic coast in northern Italy, this town has been said even in modern times to have an unhealthy climate. The placement of new settlers there in 43 B.C. suggests it was not thriving.

4 *hospes*: stranger. *pallidior*: paleness in the Mediterranean is not so much the lack of color as

a sickly yellowish, sallow complexion, compared here to the hue of a gilded bronze statue. Sappho compared it to the color of dead grass. Cf. 64.100, where Ariadne blanches to the color of gold.

6 *facinus facias*: an etymological figure like "do a deed," as in 110.4 *facis facinus*.

82

This Quintius, who appears also in poem 100, is a Veronese. It is usually understood that he has put himself in rivalry for *Lesbia*'s love. The pleading tone is built up with frequent anaphora of *oculos*, *-is* and *carius*.

2 *carius ... oculis*: repeated three times in as many lines; cf. 104.2 (of *Lesbia*), *ambobus mihi quae carior est oculis*.

3 *ei*: monosyllabic here. *illi*: i.e., Catullus.

83

Catullus wishfully speculates that if *Lesbia* speaks angrily to him in front of her husband, she must be infatuated with him. If the identification of *Lesbia* with *Clodia* is correct, the husband would be Q. Metellus Celer, and the dramatic date (if not the date of composition) would be prior to his death in 59 B.C.

1 *praesente viro* (abl. abs.) implies that the scene is for her husband's benefit, to avert suspicion of an affair—or that she is deliberately embarrassing Catullus. *dicat*, with *taceret* (3), *obloquitur* (4), and *loquitur* (6), all at the ends of lines, puts the poem's emphasis on acts of speech.

2-3 *haec*, referring to *Lesbia*'s behavior, takes its gender from the predicate *laetitia*; cf. *quae ... res* (5). *illi fatuo*, to that idiot, and the apostrophe Mule, You mule, puts *Lesbia*'s husband in the comic role of the cuckold. *nostris*: gen. of the object with verbs of remembering and forgetting.

4 *gannit et obloquitur*: snarls and interrupts me, further evidence (if only to Catullus) of *Lesbia*'s infatuation.

5 *acrior* combines "more intense" (anger is sharper than simple remembrance) with "shrewder" and perhaps "more to the point."

6 *urit* can mean both erotic and angry passion; *et* implies a logical consequence: she's on fire, and so she talks. Catullus draws a similar inference in poem 92, which begins with the same words, *Lesbia mi*.

84

A satire on an ambitious hick who doesn't know where to put his aitches, and to everyone's relief is dispatched to Syria.

1-2 *Chommoda ... hinsidias*: his talk of advantages ("hadvantages") and ambuscades ("hambuscades") is worldly, and his attempt to use *h* sounds mimics the fashion of the day (*pulcher* for *pulcer*, *sepulchrum* for *sepulcrum*, etc.), but he overdoes it and gets most of the words wrong. It had become fashionable to show off one's higher education in Greek by sounding the Greek *chi* (χ) in certain words. But Arrius has no such education and is faking it. Arrius: see appendix A.

3 *mirifice sperabat*, etc., suggests a certain conceit in his foolish excess, like that of the poetaster Sufferus in 22.17.

5-6 *mater ... avunculus ... avus ... avia*: the tone of *credo* is sarcastic because Arrius' family (who are just plain folks) would not in fact have taught him his highfalutin phony phonemes. Unlike Greek, traditional Latin has few aspirates. Like us, the Latins would not have sounded the *h* in *Achilles*. In scansion, the weak Latin *h* does not count as a consonant: for example, the third syllable of *nuntius* in line 10 scans short because of the weakness of the subsequent *h* sound in *horribilis*. *liber avunculus*: his free uncle (as opposed to the ones who were still only slaves). Such innuendo was not uncommon in a society that depended on slavery but despised slaves and people of servile origin. Cf. note on *rubra*, 67.46.

7 *Hoc misso* (abl. abs.): Arrius' ambition paid off, and he was sent off on some mission of empire to Syria.

8 *audi(e)bant eadem haec [verba]*: viz., *commoda* and *insidias*, correctly pronounced.

9-10 *metuebant ... horribilis*: comic overstatement, as usual in satire.

11 *Ionios fluctus*: the Ionian Sea just beneath the boot of Italy, which Arrius crossed on his way to Syria (*illuc*). *Hionios*: a pun on Gk. χιονέους, "snowy," implying that Arrius' speech was frigid and effete.

85

Conflicting passions towards *Lesbia*, as shown by a series of poems on this theme (72, 75, 92). This is Catullus' best-known couplet, remarkable for

its compression and power, due in part to its composition from eight verbs and no adjectives. The hexameter's four active verbs contrast with the four of the pentameter, which describe a passive state. Cf. especially *faciam* vs. *fieri*.

1 *Quare id faciam, fortasse requiris*: chastic sound.

2 *nescio* scans as a dactyl, as normally in poetry. *fieri sentio*: I feel it happen.

86

Lesbia's beauty is more than meets the eye, as is shown by this comparison with *Quintia*. The key word is *formosa*, repeated three times in three couplets. There is also a play on the relation between *venustas* (3) and *Veneres* (6).

2 *haec ... singula*: used substantively as object of *confiteor*, individual points of beauty as opposed to its totality.

3 *Totum illud formosa*: that "beautiful" as a whole, consisting of more than looks, needs *venustas* and a *mica salis*. In the middle couplet of his epigram, Catullus stretches the meaning of his key word to include more than the *forma* that one can see.

4 *tam magno corpore* does not imply obesity but a statuesque figure (cf. lines 1-2 *longa, recta*), prized in an area where women come short. There is a contrast between her impressive stature and the lack of so much as a grain of wit's salt.

5 *pulcerrima* may contain a pun on *Lesbia*'s family name; see note on 79.1, *Lesbius est pulcer*.

5-6 *cum ... tum* is the not only ... but also combination. In addition to being physically *pulcerrima*, *Lesbia* has stolen her rivals' sexy charms or *Veneres* because she has a *venustas* (line 3) that women such as *Quintia* lack. The emphatic position of the last word calls attention to the point.

87

Another *Lesbia* poem, implicitly protesting her violation of the bond created by his love. Catullus is unable to accept *Lesbia*'s rejection of the obligation that he believes his love imposes on her.

1 *amatam*: sc. *esse*. For the theme, cf. 8.5 and 37.12, *amata ... quantum amabitur nulla*.

3 ullo ... foedere: in any bond.

4 in amore tuo = in my love for you, in effect an objective genitive, as ex parte ... mea, on my part, makes clear. The grouping of words makes the diaeresis unusually weak.

88

Gellius, the sexual overachiever introduced in poem 74, is here pilloried as a specialist in incest of every type and color.

1 cum matre: an exaggeration, as often in Catullus; Gellius was accused before the senate of stuprum with his stepmother. See appendix A.

2 prurit: normally of the sexual itch, here apparently of its actual satisfaction.

3 patrum, etc.: more details in poem 74.

4 Ecquid scis: do you have any idea.

5 ultima Tethys: the wife of Oceanus, so called because she lives at the edge of the world.

7 quo prodeat ultra: to which he can proceed further.

8 demisso ... capite: with his head lowered. se ipse voret: for this meaning of vorare, cf. 80.6, grandia te medii tenta vorare viri. Permissible sex finds external objects; incest is sex that does not go far enough afield.

89

The first of three poems in a row in the continuing campaign against Gellius, the most frequently attacked of Catullus' enemies (see appendix A). The chief objective of the campaign is to label Gellius as a sexual pervert specializing in incest.

1 quid ni: why shouldn't he be? For the opening, cf. 79.1, Lesbius est pulcher: quid ni?

1-2 Cui ... vivat = cui sit, subj. in a rel. clause of characteristic expressing cause: Gellius is thin because he has so many female relatives to occupy him.

3 bonus patruus: because he supplies Gellius with another incestuous partner; see poem 74.

3-4 omnia plena: an abundance of, with the abl. puellis cognatis, young female relatives.

5 ut ... attingat: ironically concessive, though he has no contact except with forbidden partners.

90

A touch of fantasy in the defamation of Gellius, taking its inspiration from the notion that a

Persian magus must be born of an incestuous union.

1 nascatur: hortatory, let a magus be born.

3 gnato gignatur: a nearly etymological figure for comic effect; the tradition that Persian magi (and Persians generally) practiced incest with their mothers is reported by Strabo and other sources, and the priestly office was hereditary. Catullus conflates the two ideas. The Greeks and Romans were ready to believe the worst about easterners.

4 si vera est ... religio: i.e., if the report of it is true. impia religio: oxymoron.

5 gratus ... accepto ... carmine: for the redundancy, cf. 67.26, iners sterili semine.

6 omentum ... pingue: the fatty tissue around the intestines. Strabo reports that the Persians did not sacrifice the actual flesh to the gods. liquéfaciens: the first e is normally short. The compound gives the ending a mock-solemn effect.

91

Catullus exploits the image he has built of Gellius as a specialist in incest. I didn't expect you would make a pass at Lesbia, he says, since she is neither your mother nor your sister. Furthermore, I didn't think your association with me was close enough to justify your taking my Lesbia to bed as if she were related to you. This poem explains why Catullus attacked Gellius so doggedly, in a total of seven poems.

1-3 Non ideo ... quod ... cognovisse: not because I knew; the subjunctive indicates a hypothetical situation; Catullus knew he was untrustworthy.

5 neque quod = quod neque. The construction is Non ideo sperabam quod cognossem ..., sed quod videbam.

6 hanc: Lesbia.

7 multo coniungerer usu: I was joined with you in a bond of association; the underlying Roman belief is that usus creates a presumptive coniunctio that forbids associates from taking advantage of each other.

9 Tu satis id dux(is)ti: disjunctive asyndeton, with emphasis on the first word: But you thought this coniunctio was sufficient reason to make your move—not only because of your taste for culpa and scelus, but (implicitly and specifically) because you prefer women who are connected to you.

92

As in poem 83, Catullus takes comfort from Lesbia's frequent abuse as a sign that she loves him.

1-2 Lesbia mi ... Lesbia me: a typical repetition for emphasis on the main concern of the poem. Cf. the beginning of poem 83. The diaeresis after me is strong.

2-4 dispeream nisi amat ... dispeream nisi amo: the second significant repetition, emphasizing both the supposed mutuality of feeling and the perilous condition of the speaker. The diction is colloquial, using optative subj. dispeream: damned if she doesn't love me!

3 sunt totidem mea, perhaps another colloquialism, refers loosely to the bad things Lesbia says about Catullus: I say as many bad things about her. deprecor means both "I pray to be rid of her" (as in poems 8 and 76) and "I deprecate her," i.e., he merely expresses disapproval. The poem is full of ambiguity, contradiction, and wishful thinking.

93

Perhaps a reply to some attempt to bring Catullus and Caesar together. For the relations between the two, see Gaius Julius Caesar in appendix A. The indifference expressed in this epigram is more cutting than hatred.

1 nil nimium studeo: like our colloquial "I'm not too eager..." velle placere, slightly pleonastic after studeo, is idiomatic: "make an effort to please" (Fordyce).

2 albus an ater: not a matter of skin color in a racial sense, but a reference to Greek jargon for homosexuals who played a passive or an active role in sex. A "white" man is pale, and plays the passive role.

94

The Mentula made fun of here and in poems 105, 114, and 115 is probably a nickname of Caesar's protégé Mamurra (see appendix A). This couplet explores the obvious connotation of the name.

1 Mentula ... mentula: the nickname and the generic noun, respectively.

2 Hoc est quod dicunt: i.e., that's the proverb; cf. 100.3, hoc est quod dicitur. olera olla legit: i.e., the

pot takes vegetables as naturally (and mindlessly) as a mentula takes to fornication. Mentula is doing what comes naturally.

95

Catullus' friend C. Helvius Cinna has finished his short historical epic about Smyrna after nine years of careful work. This epigram compares the result to the hasty outpourings of Hortensius, Volusius, and Antimachus. The poem has been mutilated in transmission, with a missing fourth line and a word lacking at the end of line 9. Some editors take lines 9-10 as a separate poem, 95b.

1 Zmyrna: title of the poem and subject of a verb lost in line 4 (unless edita (est) in line three is the verb).

1-2 nonam post ... messem quam coepta est: after the ninth harvest after it was begun. In this compressed construction, post is used as both preposition (with acc. messem) and adverb (with quam and coepta est). edita: published.

4 Froelich made up versiculorum anno quolibet ediderit to fill the gap in the manuscript. For more about Q. Hortensius Hortalus, see appendix A.

5 Satrachi: the river in Cyprus where Adonis, son of the eponymous princess Myrrha, or Smyrna, spent time with his lover, Aphrodite.

6 cana ... saecula pervoluent: the personified ages will leaf through the pages of Cinna's poem—but as books were on rolls instead of pages, they will roll through it. The vocalic u of the verb gives it four syllables. For similar personifications, cf. cana anilitas (61.155), cana senectus (108.1), carta anus (68.46), fama anus (78b.4).

7 Volusi annales: the cacata carta that Catullus wanted to have burned in poem 36. For more about this poet and his connection with the Padua (a mouth of the Po river), see appendix A.

8 laxas scombris ... tunicas: either as fish-mongers' wrappings for mackerel (loose because there was so much paper to use up), or as loose-fitting jackets in which they were steamed.

9 mei ... sodalis: i.e., Cinna. Sodalis was supplied by a Renaissance editor to complete the line. mihi sint cordi: double dative, they can be my favorite.

10 populus: one theme of Callimachus and other Hellenistic cognoscenti was that popularity is the kiss of death in matters poetic. They preferred

under these circumstances. He cannot speak to his brother, but he can make a ritual offering.

7–9 *haec ... quae ... tradita sunt ... manantia*: these [rituals] that are offered (or handed down by tradition) are metaphorically dripping with tears. *tristi munere* is a modal abl., as a sad gift and duty; *ad* indicates purpose rather than movement as in line 2.

10 *ave atque vale*, hail and farewell, may be words of the ritual itself. Aeneas' farewell to the dead Pallas in *Aeneid* 11.97–8 uses a similar formula.

102

Catullus reassures Cornelius that he can keep a secret. This is probably not the Cornelius of poem 1, or the man from Brixia in 67.35.

1 *tacito*: substantive, to a discreet person.

2 *penitus nota*: known without reservation; *fides animi* is pleonastic, like *mens animi* (65.4), *animi curas* (2.10), and *furor animi* (63.38).

3 *illorum iure sacratum*: bound by the code of those whose *fides* is *penitus nota*.

4 *Arpocratem*: i.e., a veritable Harpocrates, proverbial for silence. See note on 74.4.

103

Silo, whose business it is to supply men with willing dates, has delivered faulty goods (or none at all). Catullus has protested and has received an uncivil answer.

1 *sodes*: < *si audes*, = if you please. *decem sestertia* = *decem milia sestertium*: 10,000 sesterces, a tidy sum for an evening's pleasure. Aeneas had her nerve charging that much in poem 41.

4 *leno ... atque idem saevus*: a pimp, and at the same time foul-tempered. For *idem* emphasizing an inconsistency, cf. 22.14. It was necessary for the *leno* in comedy (as no doubt also in real life) to be cheerful and accommodating and to take abuse philosophically.

104

Addressed to someone (perhaps imaginary) who has criticized Catullus' submissive attitude toward Lesbia. Showing anger to her is impossible, he replies; if he could speak harshly, he would not be in love. Only a clown (he implies) could do something so unnatural. The attitude of the lover anti-

cipates Augustan love elegy. Catullus says angry things about Lesbia (e.g., in poems 11—where a bitter message is sent via intermediaries—and 58), but nothing harsher than poems 60, 72, and 75 is addressed to her directly.

1 *meae maledicere vitae*: Catullus cannot, but Lesbia can in 83.1 and 92.1 (*Lesbia mi dicit semper male*), where it is taken as proof of her love. The woman benefits from this double standard. For Lesbia as *mea vita*, cf. 109.1. Acme calls Septimius *mea vita* in 45.13.

2 *carior ... oculis*: cf. poem 82, where *carius ... oculis* is repeated three times, probably also with reference to the love of Lesbia.

3 *potui, possem*: with *potuisse* in line 1, the key word of the poem. For Catullus, power is negatively related to love: the more love, the less power. *nec ... amarem*: nor, if I could (say bad things to her), would I be so helplessly in love with her.

4 *tu cum Tappone*: Tappo appears to have been a stock figure from south Italian farce; if so, the meaning is that anyone who believes a lover can say angry things to his beloved joins Tappo in doing all kinds of outrageous things.

105

The "Renaissance man" was a revival of a Roman tradition, where public figures such as Cicero, Caesar, C. Cinna, Q. Hortatulus, and Licinius Calvus tried their hand at poetry as well as oratory. Mentula (see appendix A: Mamurra) has aped the efforts of his betters with poor results; in this verbal cartoon, the Muses eject him.

1 *Pi(m)pleium montem*: Pimpleia is a place in Pieria just north of Mt. Olympus, sacred to the Muses and associated with the cult of Orpheus.

2 *furculis*: with pitchforks, a humorously realistic touch for Muses who live in the country.

106

Catullus suspects his young friend Juventius of promiscuity; in poem 24, there was the bankrupt Furius; in 81, it was an unhealthy man from Pisaurum. Now, he has been seen with an auctioneer; Catullus taunts him with readiness to auction off his favors to the highest bidder. Tradition allowed a boy to receive the sexual attentions of older men, but if he sold himself, he permanently lost his claim to respectability.

1 *Cum*: the preposition, with *puero bello* (i.e., Juventius).

2 *discupere*: is intent upon; *dis-* is an intensifying prefix, as in 92.2 *dispeream*.

107

A happy poem on the unexpected return of Lesbia after a breakup in their relationship. Repetitions of *cupido*, *optanti/optandam*, *insperanti*, *gratum*, *nobis*, *restituis*, and *vivit/vita* tell the story in a way that is almost an exaggeration of Catullan style.

1 *cupido optanti*: note the hiatus at the principal caesura.

2 *gratum ... proprie*: truly pleasing.

3 *nobisque*: the dative goes with both *gratum* and *carius auro*. The plural is understood in the singular sense, as in line 6.

5 *ipsa*: of your own accord.

6 *lucem*: exclamatory acc., day (cf. *festis luminibus*, holidays, in 66.90). *candidiore nota*: abl. of description. Special days were proverbially marked with a white stone. Cf. 68.148, *lapide candidiore*.

7 *vivit* = est; cf. 89.1–2, *cui tam bona mater ... vivat*.

7–8 *magis hac rem optandam ... in*: Postgate's emendation of an unreadable manuscript: who will have been able to tell of a thing in life more to be wished for than this?

108

Lines describing the undignified fate of a hated person's corpse became a minor topos of abuse, going back perhaps to Callimachus' lost *Ibis*; cf. Horace *Epodes* 5.96–100, Ovid *Ibis* 165–72. This wishful account of the end of an old scoundrel named Cominius starts slowly and ends quickly.

1 *populi arbitrio*: by popular demand.

3 *inimica bonorum*: the enemy of upstanding citizens. *Bonus* in contexts such as this was commonly applied to citizens of the "better" (i.e., wealthier) class. Applied to *lingua*, the phrase suggests that this Cominius spent his time bringing accusations against wealthy persons in hopes of getting out-of-court settlements.

4 *sit data*: not the perfect subjunctive, but a periphrastic alternate for *detur*; cf. *voret* in the next line. Both subjunctives complete the *non dubito quin* construction and represent a fulfill-

ment of the hypothetical (future less vivid) *si ... intereat* condition.

6: *voret* is to be understood as the verb.

109

Catullus wishes the *amor* that Lesbia says will be both pleasant and permanent could only become a bond of *sanctae amicitiae*. The epigram consists of two apostrophes, first to Lesbia and then to the gods. The content is similar to that of poem 70: he doesn't really trust Lesbia's assurances, knowing as he does that he wants a commitment that Lesbia is not prepared to make.

1–2 *iucundum* and *perpetuum* are predicative with *fore*; *proponis* implies a declaration of willingness or intent; it governs the infinitive *fore* in indirect statement.

5 *tota ... vita*: ablative for duration of time instead of the usual accusative.

6 The interlocked phrases imply marriage. Lesbia wants a pleasant affair (line 1: *iucundum ... amorem*); Catullus wants something more serious, as his collection of solemn words (*aeternum ... sanctae foedus*) indicates. The poem thus hangs on the contrast between the language of the first couplet and that of the last, between the *amor* that Lesbia proposes and the bonding of a sacred *amicitia* that Catullus prays for, upgrading what she says to what he desires. This reveals a central problem in the relationship: Catullus hopes for more than Lesbia wants.

110

Aufillena and her brother were ironically romantic figures in poem 100; here she is just a tart, and a dishonest one at that.

1 *bonae ... amicae*: disapproval of prostitution has deprived the English language of neutral terms for women who sell sexual services. "Courtesan" evokes a world of kings and courtiers; "prostitute" suggests furtive depravity and exploitation; "whore" evokes something even worse. Here, *bona amica* is a friendly woman who keeps a deal.

2 *pretium*, [*eorum*] *quae*: a specific one of the prices they establish for various services. *quae* is neut. acc. pl.

3–4 *quod*: three conjunctions, leading up to *facis facinus*. Because you promised, because you lied, because you often take without giving, you are a